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ABSTRACT

This overview of the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) discusses the initiation and development of BAWP, the proliferation of programs based on the Bay Area model, and the establishment of the National Writing Project (NWP). The basis for BAWP is described as the recognition that there are outstanding teachers of writing in the schools and that these teachers, when identified and encouraged, can serve as the best teachers of their peers. The report deals with other aspects of BAWP such as inservice training programs that range from three-hour workshops to year-long series of programs; follow-up activities such as monthly meetings, writing groups, and newsletters; other teacher education efforts at the University of California such as the Open Program (part of Berkeley's Summer Program for Teachers), the Subject-A Training Program, the Pre-Service Credential Program, and a Master of Arts in Teaching program; classroom based research in California secondary schools; teacher-written curriculum publications; an emphasis on writing across the curriculum; and program expansion to the state level. The last portion of the report describes the development of the NWP, explains the procedure for establishing new NWP sites, and summarizes recent evaluations of the effects of BAWP. (AEA)

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BAY AREA WRITING PROJECT/CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT/ NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT: An Overview

Bay Area Writing Project
University of California, School of Education

Since its first Summer Writing Institute in 1974, the University of California, Berkeley, Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) has had a profound effect on countless teachers and students, not merely in the San Francisco Bay Area, but also throughout the state of California as a result of its offspring, the California Writing Project (CWP), and the nation through the National Writing Project (NWP). The growth of the BAWP idea is a success story unparalleled in education in recent years.

BAWP began in 1971 as a result of concern about the quality of writing being produced by freshmen at the University of California, Berkeley. It was decided at the outset that the University should not try to fix "blame" for the problem, but should rather seek to involve public schools and the University in a cooperative attempt to find a solution.

This decision led to the development of the core of BAWP's program, the Summer Institutes, which have, since 1974, trained over 150 pre-school, elementary, secondary, and college teachers to work as teacher/consultants in their own and other districts, sharing with their colleagues methods of teaching writing which have proven successful in their own classroom. In the first year, 1974-1975, fourteen school districts funded inservice programs using BAWP teacher/consultants.

Educators at the state level began considering BAWP as a model for staff development in the teaching of writing. In late 1975, Wilson Riles, state Superintendent of Public Instruction, asked William Webster, Deputy State Superintendent, and George Nemetz, a consultant in the State Department of Education, to explore ways for the department to help reverse the decline in student writing ability. BAWP, which had already completed two successful Summer Institutes, was designated an exemplary project for adoption as a Title IV-C project.

While planning on the state level was underway, BAWP received word that the National Endowment for the Humanities would provide seed money to establish

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additional writing projects for a California Writing Project and a National Writing Project. By the fall of 1979, 16 sites in California and 52 additional sites nationwide had been established, forming a network unified by a national newsletter, yearly meetings of project directors, and periodic visits by members of the BAWP staff. Thus what had begun as a regional attempt to meet a regional need had evolved, within five years from the first Institute, into the National Writing Project.

THE SUMMER INSTITUTES

BAWP is built upon the recognition that there are outstanding teachers of writing in the schools. These teachers are themselves sources of knowledge about the teaching of writing, knowledge of a different sort from that found in the books of composition theory, knowledge gained by the successes and failures of day-to-day classroom experience. These teachers can be identified, brought together to share what each of them individually had discovered, and exposed to the theoretical knowledge that does exist. Thus trained, these teachers of writing become the best teachers of other teachers: best because their information has stood the test of classroom practice and is presented in practical terms that other teachers can translate directly into lessons for their students.

From these assumptions the basic model of the BAWP Summer Institute was created. To have impact, a program aimed at improving instruction should be concentrated geographically, and it should have a narrower focus than the entire English curriculum. BAWP met these criteria by working only with teachers from the nine counties of the San Francisco Bay ARea and by focusing on the teaching of writing.

For the first Summer Institute in 1974 twenty-five exemplary composition teachers were selected and designated University Fellows. The University of California, Berkeley, budgeted $13,000 for the first year, which included $500

stipends for each teacher to cover tuition and other costs.

The Summer Institutes meet four days a week for five weeks. The principal activity during the mornings is presentations by the participants of methods of teaching writing that each had found successful in the classroom. During the presentations each speaker explains the theoretical assumptions behind the method being demonstrated and describes the skills the method is designed to teach. Frequently the presenter distributes personally-developed instructional materials and examples of student work. Often, too, the presenter involves the audience in assuming the roles of his students and writing the assignments being demonstrated. Presentations by the twenty-five fellows are supplemented by two or three presentations by guest speakers, nationally-known authorities on the teaching of writing, who explain significant research findings or describe approaches not covered by the fellows.

The Institute promotes no single philosophy or methodology. Instead, teachers are presented with a cross section of theories and approaches to weigh and debate. Within this flexible framework, however, BAWP has identified several topics which it considers fundamental for Institute discussion:

- The composing process: pre-writing activities through revision.
- Syntax: the approaches of Christensen, O'Hare, and Strong
- Sequence: personal writing to analytical writing, forming the thesis, patterns of reasoning, sources of content.
- Small-group techniques: peer criticism, writing to real audiences within the classroom, reading aloud in small groups.
- Writing assessment: holistic and close reading techniques, including different methods of feature analysis.

BAWP deliberately mixes teachers from all grade levels, kindergarten through graduate school. Through their discussions, participants discover that the writing process is similar at all levels. There is no sequence in learning

which requires students to learn to write a sentence at one grade level, a paragraph at another, and an essay even later. Instead, students at all grade levels can work on complete pieces of discourse, with the teacher focusing on the process of writing at whatever level of maturity the student is able to understand.

A very important aspect of the Institutes is the writing done by the participants. During the first four weeks the fellows are asked to write about a subject of personal interest from three different points of view, ranging from personal to analytical. Papers are duplicated for distribution in small response groups in which the papers are read aloud by the writer and thoroughly discussed. During the final week, the teachers prepare personal position papers describing their philosophies and practices in light of the new information and insights they have received. Many of the teachers initially find writing for other teachers to be a new and frightening experience. The personal writing, however, breaks down barriers that might exist between teachers from different schools, grade levels, and backgrounds, and becomes the highlight of the summer experience for many.

In addition to helping to weld the group together, the extensive writing, though exhausting, gives participants insights into the experience of their students which they can gain in no other way. "Those of us who experienced that first summer program at Berkeley came away convinced that English teachers who want to teach writing must themselves write," says Mary Lee Glass, an English teacher at Gunn High School in Palo Alto. "Only when we ourselves have practiced writing along with reading about it--when we have agonized over the process as well as theorized about it--can we have the patience, persistence, and on-the-job inspiration to understand and use approaches that others have worked out. And only then can we begin to comprehend what it is like to be a kid faced with a blank piece of paper."

The writing response groups, which meet during the afternoons throughout the Institute, provide a model for small group work in the classroom. Some students are more likely to discover their own errors when reading their papers aloud than they are when proofreading silently. Also, the student-as-tutor has his or her knowledge of the mechanics of writing reinforced by pointing out an error in another's writing.

Teachers complete the Institute invigorated and anxious to share their new knowledge and insights with their colleagues. As they leave the Institute, the fellows have one more assignment: a written curriculum project. Frequently, these projects are materials the teachers prepare for inservice training presentations. They can also be materials tailored for use in the teacher's own classroom.

INSERVICE TRAINING

Following the first Summer Institute, key school administrators suggested by summer fellows were invited to a dinner meeting at the University Faculty Club hosted by the Dean of the School of Education, the Dean of the School of Letters and Sciences, and the Provost of the Professional Schools at the University of California, Berkeley. The deans stressed the University's point of view that the schools and universities share a writing problem that can only be solved through cooperative efforts. The administrators were urged to use the talents of teacher/consultants through training programs at the school or district level. The range of consulting services provided by the project was also explained.

Any inservice training coordinated by BAWP, the administrators were told, is planned cooperatively by project and district personnel. The cooperation

insures that the training is directed toward local needs and that the district will have a commitment to its success. The district also makes a financial commitment to cover the cost of teacher/consultants.

Inservice programs are flexible and take various forms depending on the desires and particular needs of the district. The typical, year-long program involves ten or more three-hour sessions conducted every other week by teacher/consultants trained in the Summer Institutes and coordinated by BAWP staff. A full range of specific approaches to the teaching of composition is introduced and, because the sessions are long, the teachers themselves write as if they were students who will receive the instruction. Other possible programs include after-school or Saturday workshops, English department presentations, and school-wide across the curriculum workshops. In some programs, participants write out-of-class assignments that are read and revised in small writing response groups.

Year-long BAWP inservice programs for school districts usually include presentations on many of the following topics:

Organization of the writing class:

Improving teacher responses to student writing--including how to grade, edit, correct student papers.

Examples of various sequences for teaching writing.

The use and organization of writing folders.

The theoretical bases for writing programs:

The composing process--from pre-writing to revising.

Research on the development of writing ability.

The connections between oral language and writing and between reading and writing.

The connections between the study of grammar and the improvement of writing ability.

Specific practices in the teaching of composition:

Teaching writing across the curriculum.

Encouraging writing to a variety of audiences.

Using sentence combining activities.

Teaching the reluctant or remedial writer.

Using small writing response groups.

Directing the writing of research papers and papers about literature.

Helping students move from personal experience writing to writing about ideas.

Stimulating fluency prior to dealing with form and correctness.

Evaluating writing programs:

Methods of evaluating writing ability for grading, placement, and choosing appropriate curriculum materials.

Methods of measuring writing competencies and evaluating programs.

Other inservice programs spawned by BAWP include:

-- Ten-week three-hour workshop programs led by teacher/consultants in Stanislaus, Tuolumne and the nine Bay Area counties, including follow-up programs in subsequent years.

-- A five-year writing improvement program planned cooperatively by the Santa Rosa Unified School District and BAWP, which began with a summer program for junior high school teachers.

-- District assessments of writing ability using holistic scoring of writing samples planned cooperatively by district teachers and BAWP consultants.

-- Year long inservice series for college instructors of writing sponsored by BAWP and RAEBCU (Regional Association of East Bay Colleges and Universities).

-- Writing across the curriculum workshops for entire faculties of schools funded by state programs (AB 65 and AB 551).

-- Districtwide revision of composition programs and requirements in Petaluma and Milpitas school districts by their own teacher/consultants.

-- Annual writing seminars at Diablo Valley College for English department staff members.

-- Total revision of the composition program at Carlmont High School in Belmont, including new courses, writing requirements for all elective courses and a writing assessment program.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

BAWP has many activities designed to keep Institute graduates in touch with each other and with new developments. As inservice programs begin to take shape, teacher/consultants attend planning meetings to coordinate and compare presentations.

Throughout the year, BAWP hosts monthly Saturday meetings for three hours. At some meetings the teachers write; at others they hear new presentations or guest speakers. By the 1979-80 school year, there were more than 150 teacher/consultants. Attendance at the Saturday sessions averages 40 to 50. All teacher/consultants are also invited to hear the guest speakers at each Summer Institute.

Some teachers, eager to continue the growth in their personal writing, form writing groups that continue to meet during the year. Others form special-interest groups. Logic, reasoning, syntax or secondary curriculum are some of the areas stressed. Elementary teacher/consultants meet together by grade levels to discuss common problems. A similar group was formed of college teachers who had attended the Summer Institute.

Those who do not join groups or attend the meetings can still keep in touch through the BAWP Newsletter. Many articles are contributed by the teacher/consultants themselves. Some articles describe activities of individuals; others discuss new developments of the project; still others explore an aspect of writing.

AN EXPANDING CIRCLE

Interest in BAWP techniques has spread beyond the continental United States. In the summer of 1978, BAWP teacher/consultants conducted workshops in the Virgin Islands, Alaska, and England. In 1979 workshops were held in England, Alaska, Tokyo, Singapore, and Hawaii. This worldwide outreach seems likely to continue as word of BAWP's successes in helping teachers spreads.

THE OPEN PROGRAM

The invitational Summer Institutes and the first two years of inservice workshops generated so much teacher interest that by spring of 1976 the BAWP office was being deluged by inquiries from teachers wishing to participate in BAWP activities. To meet this demand, the BAWP staff decided to initiate in the summer of 1976 a course which would be open to anyone who wished to enroll. This course, dubbed the "Open Program," has continued to be offered each summer as a part of the University of California, Berkeley's Summer Program for Teachers. The course, "Teaching Writing at All Grade Levels," is coordinated and taught by a team of BAWP teacher/consultants, all of them full-time classroom teachers during the school year. Enrollment has been between 70-100 teachers representing all grade levels from kindergarten through college, including not only English teachers but teachers of social studies, mathematics, homemaking, physical education, and many other disciplines, and school administrators as well. Teachers have come from as far away as New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Anchorage to enroll in the program.

Participants in the Open Program read the most useful published research and theoretical discussions of the teaching of writing; hear presentations by the instructors, by teacher/consultants from past Summer Institutes, and by guest speakers; and meet in small groups to discuss special interests in the teaching of writing or applications of presented ideas to specific grade levels.

Most important, however, is that, like teachers in the invitational program, participants write papers ranging from personal experience pieces to fiction, poetry, essays, and finally a personal statement of philosophy of teaching writing. Writing is duplicated and read and discussed in small response groups. At the conclusion of the summer, participants publish several anthologies of the writing they have done.

OTHER BAWP PROGRAMS

In addition to the Summer Institute, the Open Program, and school district inservice education programs, BAWP is involved in other teacher education efforts. One of these is the Subject-A Training Program. Subject-A is the University's basic writing course for all students who score below 600 on the English Achievement Test of the College Entrance Examination Board and who fail an additional Subject-A diagnostic essay examination. Each year fifteen U.C. Berkeley feeder high schools are invited to send an advanced composition teacher to the University for a two-week summer training program conducted by the Subject-A staff. In this program, similar to the one provided new instructors of Subject-A, teachers study the Subject-A methodology, examine diagnostic essays, visit Subject-A classes, write Subject-A essays themselves, and discuss problems and concerns with the Subject-A staff. Following the summer session, the Subject-A staff visits the teachers' schools to read and discuss essays with student writers. The purpose of this program is to pass on the techniques the Subject-A staff has developed to prepare students for college writing in ten weeks to high school teachers so that students can bypass Subject-A when they reach the University.

To help solve the problem of teachers going into the schools with little training in teaching of writing, BAWP is involved also in the Pre-Service Credential Program at U.C., an experimental teacher preparation program for English and related

majors who plan to teach in intermediate and secondary schools. The program draws extensively on BAWP teacher/consultants as classroom supervising teachers and as guest instructors in professional courses on campus. During the winter quarter, credential candidates participate in a mini-version of BAWP's teacher/consultant Summer Institute. In the spring, their supervised teaching experience also includes field research on the teaching of writing, usually in collaboration with BAWP teacher/consultants. Program graduates are fully credentialed as English teachers, with special qualifications for teaching writing.

In addition, a Master of Arts in Teaching is available. Jointly administered by the English and Education faculties, the M.A.T. program affords candidates wide latitude in relating academic and theoretical interests to classroom practices problems encountered by teachers.

CLASSROOM-BASED RESEARCH

One of the basic assumptions of BAWP is that the practice of teaching is a source of knowledge about how students learn that is parallel to but different from the knowledge that grows out of university-based research and theorizing. Given the time and the methodology, BAWP believes, teachers could indeed test their insights about what works in the classroom, and present their findings in a form that would be useful to other teachers.

Acting on this belief, three BAWP teacher/consultants, with the help of a BAWP research assistant, have completed classroom studies of the effects of methods, materials, or ideas they developed about the teaching of writing.

Rebekah Caplan, a teacher at Foothill High School in Pleasanton, tested materials she had developed for teaching students the use of more specific, vivid language. Caplan and two other teachers of twelfth grade Advanced Composition taught the materials to one class each, and each taught a control class which received the same instruction except for the Caplan material. Students in all

classes wrote essays of argumentations and personal narratives at the beginning and the end of the experiment. Students in Caplan's project class made significant gains on both papers as compared with her control class, whereas there was no significant difference between students in project and control classes of the other teachers, both of whom had used Caplan's program to a much lesser degree.

In another project, Pat Woodworth, a teacher at Tomales High School, and Catharine Keech, BAWP research assistant, set out to see if students writing for specific audiences did better writing than students writing for a general audience. Students in six classes were randomly assigned three different forms of the same topic: write about "the first time you experienced something which may later have become ordinary, or may never have been repeated, but was special when experienced for the first time." For one-third of the students, no audience was specified. For one-third, students were told, "Imagine you are writing for someone who has not yet had, but may soon have, a similar experience." The remaining one-third were asked to "choose someone you know who has not yet had, but may soon have, a similar experience."

Woodworth and Keech discovered no significant difference in the writing of the three groups, but did discover that students, who had been told that their papers would be read and analyzed by an outside research team, wrote consistently better for this assignment than they did on other more usual class assignments. They concluded that audience did indeed have an effect on the quality of writing, but that the real audience perceived by all three groups was the researchers. They further concluded that students may be motivated to produce their best efforts by a "sense of occasion" which can be provided by a variety of rhetorical situations including writing for real audiences, writing for special testers, writing for publication, and writing to share with peers.

In a third research study, Stephanie Gray, also a teacher at Foothill High

School, tested the effects on ninth and eleventh grade students of a training program in expository writing she had developed entitled "Writing From Given Information." Two project classes and two control classes were used, and all were given pre and post essay tests in writing both compare-and-contrast and process essays. The eleventh grade project class made statistically significant gains on the holistic scores of both types of essays and, in analytic readings of the essays, also increased the number of comparing terms used and the number of sentences referring to both items being compared. The ninth grade classes did not improve, primarily, the researchers feel, because of motivational factors within the school completely unrelated to the materials.

These three studies and samples of the teaching materials used by the teacher/researchers will be published by BAWP in early 1980. Additional classroom-based research projects are underway and will be published when completed.

PUBLICATIONS

In keeping with its belief that the classroom teacher is a source of valuable knowledge about teaching and learning, BAWP has launched a series of teacher-written curriculum publications, each focusing on a different aspect of the teaching of composition. The first publication, written by teacher/consultants Ruby Bernstein and Bernard Tanner, analyzes writing samples from the California High School Proficiency Examination. In the second, Jack Hailey examines numerous aspects of Teaching Writing K Through 8. Sarah Dandridge and others discuss Independent Study and Writing. In Formative Writing Virginia Draper explains techniques that can be used by teachers in all subject areas to help students use writing, not merely as a means of testing knowledge, but as a method of gaining knowledge. Miriam Ylvisaker describes An Experiment in Encouraging Fluency and Mary K. Healy discusses her techniques of Using Student Writing Response Groups in the Classroom.

Under the terms of its latest grant from the Carnegie Foundation of New York and the National Endowment for the Humanities, BAWP is now preparing a series of publications for the National Writing Project. These include a handbook for directors of National Writing Project sites, a handbook for schools and districts detailing methods of assessing student writing to measure student competency or to evaluate a composition program, and a series of loose-leaf collections of teaching practices tentatively entitled Writing Teachers at Work.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

BAWP believes that writing can be a powerful tool for learning in all school subjects. During the past five years BAWP has started adding teachers from science, social studies, business, mathematics, and home economics to its Summer Institutes and inservice programs. By increasing student writing opportunities in other subjects, schools can help students gain new insights in subject matter as well as improve their writing ability.

THE CALIFORNIA WRITING PROJECT (CWP)

The expansion of the BAWP concept to the state level began in 1975 when William Webster, Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction and George Nemetz, English Consultant in the State Department of Education formed an Ad Hoc State Advisory Committee on Student Writing. The committee included a teacher/consultant and the co-directors of BAWP, teachers, administrators, parents, students and college faculty from all areas of the state.

The committee recommended that the Department identify outstanding teachers of composition and outstanding composition programs. It also recommended that the Department, in cooperation with local school districts, colleges, universities, and county offices of education, promote inservice training in the teaching of

writing, using these exemplary teachers and programs. The Bay Area Writing Project became the model for the state program.

Members of the committee from the Los Angeles basin began talking about forming an organization to promote writing in their area. A steering committee was formed in May, 1976. Attending the meeting were representatives from public school districts, county offices of education, the CSUC system, the University of California system, private colleges and universities and an ex-officio member from the California State Department of Education. This highly representative structure laid the groundwork for cooperative working relationships in the California Writing Project (CWP).

The State Department of Education later sponsored similar conferences in San Diego and Chico to stimulate interest in writing projects in those areas. It was at this time that the National Endowment for the Humanities became interested in spreading the Writing Project idea nationwide. Money provided by NEH led to the establishment of eight new Writing Projects in California and one each in New York, Colorado, New Jersey, and Oregon by the summer of 1977.

In addition to the initial NEH grant that provided "seed" money support for the eight additional sites in the California Writing Project, the State Department of Education, through Title IV-C, has supported the statewide project with a series of adoption grants that districts can apply for to replicate the Bay Area Writing Project model in local Writing Project sites. The total Title IV-C support since 1977 is now well over $600,000.

THE NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT

The National Writing Project began in 1977 with matching grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and support from school districts and universities. The NEH grants provide $15,000 per Writing Project for one year. In order to receive the grant, new projects must come up with matching funds from

the sponsoring universities and participating local school districts. During the first year, each project is expected to build a success record that will ensure continuing support from local sources. BAWP screens applications, provides matching funds and gifts, conducts planning meetings at Berkeley, and sends BAWP teacher/consultants to the initial Summer Institute at the new writing center.

NEH made an additional grant available in 1978, bringing the total to 41 projects in 24 states, including 14 in California. In 1979, NEH grants and other support raised the total to 68 projects throughout the United States.

In November of 1978 NWP became a truly national network with the publication of the first national newsletter. NEH also provided a small grant for inter-site visits and meetings of national site directors to exchange information on policies and practices at various sites. NWP is coordinated by the BAWP staff assisted by a six member national Advisory Board whose members are selected from active NWP site directors.

NWP SITES: THE MODEL AND ITS VARIATIONS

Each new NWP site is modeled after, but not identical to, the Bay Area Writing Project. The major components which define the BAWP model are:

-- The Summer Institutes
-- The School-Year Inservice Programs. These vary considerably from site to site as local needs are different in various parts of the country.
-- Evaluation and Assessment: Almost every NWP site has incorporated an evaluation plan of some kind to measure outcomes of the training program.

Some NWP site directors use different methods of selecting participants for their Summer Institutes. Some make a general open announcement of the Institute and accept applications, usually accompanied by a written statement of the applicant's qualifications and references. Applications are screened, and applicants are usually interviewed as well, either in individual or group interview sessions. In some sites, where applicants come from widely scattered

areas, directors solicit applications and then interview by telephone or mail. In other states the site director tours the state to conduct interviews of interested teachers.

The Summer Institutes themselves generally follow a pattern similar to that of BAWP. In some, the typical five week program has been extended an additional week to permit presentations to school administrators and local community leaders, work with students, or school program planning.

EVALUATION OF BAWP/CWP/NWP

In October of 1979 Michael Scriven, director of the Evaluation Institute at the University of San Francisco, released the results of a three-year, $150,000 evaluation of the Bay Area Writing Project funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Although the student performance component of the evaluation was not definitive, the program, as compared with other writing improvement efforts, was called by Scrivin "the best large-scale effort to improve composition now in operation in this country." "We looked at comparable English projects, but they were very single-thrust approaches," said Scriven. He described the project as "impressive, with a highly intelligent approach." Particularly impressive was the continued enthusiasm for the project among participants. "Almost all BAWP participants felt strongly enthusiastic about their experiences with the project regardless of their grade level or years of involvement; this enthusiasm reportedly did not diminish over the years," evaluators reported.

Among the features of the BAWP model singled out by Scriven as important in contributing to the continuing enthusiasm of participating teachers were "the treatment of teachers as extremely valuable resources and as autonomous agents; the heavy emphasis on the importance of the teachers doing more writing themselves; the stress on prewriting activities by students, and on multi-mode writing and on writing across the curriculum; the use of an eclectic but carefully selective range of experts as resources designed to broaden the classroom-bound teacher's

horizons; the stress on holistic assessment; the continual updating of the program content; peer criticism (both of teachers' writing and of students' writing)."

The Writing Project concept has also received praise from other sources. Ben Nelms, editor of English Education, cited as a major strength of the projects a "new professionalism" among teachers. "Teachers in the project are viewed as professionals, with their own areas of professsional expertise, their own successful classroom experiences to report, and their own contribution to make to the improvement of their fellows....This shared responsibility for improved teaching may be the theme of a new and exciting professionalism." Finally, Paul Diederich, Senior Research Associate of Educational Testing Service, observes that "BAWP has stirred up English teachers to an extent that I have seldom if ever seen. I was closely involved in the work of some of the research and development centers established by Project English, but none of them started what one would call a 'movement.' I now believe that the Bay Area Writing Project really has started a movement that is sweeping the country....With all my bias in favor of hard data, I am already pretty sure that this is one of those ideas that will last--like Langdell's invention of the case method of teaching law about 1870."

Through Summer Institutes and inservice sessions, the projects are proving that teachers can teach students to write. The combination of new information, learning by doing class lessons, and rediscovering the writing process is giving teachers the confidence to stress writing in their classes--not writing that focuses on the conventional surface garnishes of spelling and punctuation, but on the truly basic skills of clarity and coherence.

Several traits have contributed to BAWP's excellent evaluations. First, BAWP approaches curriculum changes by asking successful classroom teachers to tell other teachers what they do. This approach differs from the method that attempts to develop the perfect packet of materials for teaching writing in any classroom in the country or the method that attempts find the answer in a

controlled research setting and then have the researcher tell the practitioners what to do. BAWP's approach puts a high value on good teaching and successful practitioners. Many of the teacher/consultants have never been asked by their districts to describe even one lesson they use in the classroom, and when they are suddenly told that successful teaching is valuable, they begin to have a renewed interest and enthusiasm for their profession.

Second, BAWP attempts to create a professional community which is sustained through monthly meetings, newsletters, and constant inservice activity. Teachers who have been treated with the "teacher-proof materials" method or the "research lab" method frequently surfer from alienation from their jobs, their schools, and their profession. They need the reinforcement of a community of teachers who value good teaching and who have established a professional dialogue with each other.

Third, BAWP believes that one of the best ways to understand the problems of students is to be a student oneself. Teachers of writing must write, and all teachers must continue to learn from each other.

BAWP is then a movement, as Paul Diederich says, and a "new professionalism," as Ben Nelms says because BAWP believes that solutions reside in a new understanding of the teacher's role, not one-shot programs.